

**HISTORY OF EMPLOYER-PROVIDED EDUCATION
FROM THE DECADES FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR
TO THE POST-INDUSTRIAL ERA, 1865 – 1970**

by

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ABSTRACT

Employer-sponsored programs of education for workers in the United States began to receive serious attention in the decades following the Civil War, and they continued to evolve and to expand into what is known today as human resource development. Although this form of education of workers in the United States has acquired importance and prominence and is especially crucial at this time in the country's history as it shifts to an information-based economy, there has been little or no research investigating how it has evolved. This is the problem that was investigated in this study: How has employer-provided education for workers in the United States developed from the time industrialism transformed the workplace in the decades following the Civil War to the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial economy?

This exploratory, integrative study creates a synthesis which creates a more complete and accurate picture of the history of corporate education. For purposes of this study, learning was classified into four domains – basic education, job skills training, general education, and professional development. A main focus of the study was how economic, technical, political, societal, ideological, and structural conditions have accompanied the changes in the economic base of the United States and have been associated with programs of education in these four domains. While historians have begun to look more intently at the workplace and the changes it has undergone, there have been only limited explanations of workplace education for employees. This study addresses the history of this increasingly important practice which has yet to receive adequate historical attention.